

YOUR LOGOLOGICAL ASSETS

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The ordinary individual has long regarded his name and address as his most prized logological possessions. They identify him, they locate him, they represent him -- in short, they are him. In keeping with the treatment accorded rare jewels, the average owner of a name and address has been understandably reluctant to subject them to indiscriminate and possibly injurious use by putting them on public display, by giving them out for the mere asking. Psychologically, this attitude harks back to primitive times, when there was felt to be magic in a name, so that a stranger in possession of one's name could use it to bring either good or evil upon the rightful owner of that name. In spite of man's leap into the Nuclear and Missile Age, that attitude has remained firmly embedded in the substrata of human consciousness.

Unfortunately, the innate desire to shield name and address from prying eyes, to protect them against unauthorized use, to safeguard oneself from wizards and malefactors, collides head-on with the stark reality of a world in which one is ceaselessly requested to identify oneself. Countless forms must be filled out, starting or ending with a set of lines intended for one's name and address. No one living in or near what we call "civilization" can escape the never-ending demand that one literally bare one's soul by identifying oneself.

For some years, I have been studying ways and means of reconciling the seemingly impossible conflict, of finding a solution to what has become an agonizing dilemma. With the welfare of fellow logologists uppermost in my mind, I have decided to publish the results of my research, to share my own success in coping with the problem. There follows a series of suggestions, to which all readers are welcome. It should be understood, of course, that it is not necessary, or desirable, or even possible, to apply all or most of them in any real situation. Pick out three or four tactics most appropriate to the case in hand, and apply them. This will generally be sufficient to perplex and to frustrate the Grand Inquisitor who insists on nailing you to the cross, as it were: in particularly fortunate instances, it may even lead to his own collapse.

1. Be forgetful. Just ignore the request for name and address. Be sure, however, to fill in the rest of the form with scrupulous attention to detail, omitting nothing. If the form is subsequently returned to you for proper completion, you then launch into a sequence of maneuvers selected from those listed hereinafter. Remember that every successfully executed delaying tactic scores a

point for you in this battle of wills.

2. Simulate the handwriting of a 105-year-old arthritic afflicted with a severe case of palsy. The result will astonish you; even you won't be able to read your name and address!
3. If the form lying before you stipulates "Please print name and address", demonstrate your capacity for independent, mature, analytical thinking and judgment by using handwriting. This will enable you to launch into Tactic No. 2, above.
4. If, on the other hand, the instructions tell you to be sure to sign your name, this is a clear signal for you to handprint or even type your name. You can always confuse the interrogator in other ways, and withholding your signature scores a point for you: it may, for instance, relieve you of responsibility for a debt.
5. Overkill is a favorite strategy, in the opinion of some experts. Asked merely for your name and address, you also squeeze in your date of birth, your telephone number, the hours during which you can usually be reached at home, and a detailed etymology of your middle name, tracing it back to its proto-Indo-European roots. Never mind if that name happens to be Amerind or Chinese; trace it back to proto-Indo-European roots, anyway. You will impress your tormentor with the profundity of your erudition, with your mastery of language, with the ultimate unity of all languages.
6. Play games with your Zip Code. Forget to include it. If you do show it, scribble it indistinctly. You will soon master the art of writing a symbol that could be either a 4 or a 9, either a 3 or an 8, either a 5 or a 6, either a 2 or a 7, either a 1 or a 7. Since there is no actual Zip Code consisting exclusively of zeros, you will be able to create some doubt about your correct Zip Code, regardless of what it happens to be.
7. Better yet, move to one of the larger cities in Canada. That nation has recently inaugurated a system of postal zoning analogous to Zip Codes, but very different in appearance. Each code consists of six symbols, a mixture of letters and numerals. This affords splendid opportunities for baffling your interrogator, unless he is an expert on the new Canadian codes. For example, you can develop a symbol that could be taken either as the numeral 0, or as the letter O, or as the letter D. Another of your symbols will serve either as the letter I or the numeral 1, or even as a lower-case letter l. Expanding your insight into the problem, you will soon perceive the essential similarity between S and 5, between G and 6. You will make additional discoveries as you increase your proficiency in dissimulation.
8. Returning to the concept of overkill, live at a street address but also rent a post office box. Then, give both addresses instead of one only. Make your inquisitor have to choose between the two without adequate data for making such a choice. Agonizing deci-

sions of this sort have been known to drive men mad!

9. If you live in your own home, give its legal address instead of its post office address. Thus, you might identify yourself as residing on Lot 7 of Block 22 in Mustard and Day's addition to the City of Dayton. No one will know where that is.
10. It is no wonder that, in our permissive times, sex enters the picture. If you are a female, many options become available to you that must forever remain closed to males. Be a liberated woman, and give your title as MS instead of MISS or MRS. This makes your tormentor have to toss a coin to decide whether you are single or married.
11. If you are married, sign your name as "Mrs. Edward Kitzelfinger" instead of as "Mary Kitzelfinger". Since your interrogator will not believe that you are a freak with the first name of Edward, he will realize that you have outwitted him, but be powerless to strike back at you.
12. Even more cleverly, sign your name as "Mrs. E. H. Kitzelfinger". This will leave him wondering whether the initials are yours or your husband's.
13. If your husband has the same first name as did his father, be bold and sign your name as "Mary Kitzelfinger, Jr." This will raise the question as to whether you are semi-illiterate, or whether you are that one person in ten billion whose surname is "Kitzelfinger, Jr."
14. Be very, very sneaky. Marry a man whose first name is a typically feminine one, but one which is very occasionally also borne by men: a name such as Shirley, or Beverly, or Vivian. If your signature appears as "Mrs. Shirley Kitzelfinger", the automatic assumption will be that "Shirley" is your own name, when it is no such thing. If you are already married to a male with a reprehensibly conventional first name, divorce him and pick a more suitably named spouse. Whatever inconveniences this may entail in your life will be minor compared to your repeated future triumphs in disguising yourself.
15. Choose to live on a street, or in a city, with a name identical to your first or your last name. Whoever examines your form will tend to assume that you must have made a mistake, because coincidences like that are very rare, indeed.
16. Instead of living on a street, avenue, or road, live on a more exotically designated thoroughfare, and abbreviate. In abbreviations lies the key to success. Thus, it will be impossible to decide whether CRT stands for Court or for Crescent (you'd be amazed at how many Crescents there are in Canada). Similarly, TR could stand either for Terrace or for Turnpike, and PK either for Park or for Parkway. You will certainly be able to extend

the catalog of ambiguous abbreviations yourself.

17. Give your true address, but when the Grand Inquisitor replies, do not open his communication. Instead, write "Addressee Unknown" across the front of the envelope and drop it into the nearest mailbox. It is almost certain that the post office will return the letter to the sender, with foreseeably interesting results.
18. Come to know your postmaster personally and intimately. If you do not live in a very large city, this will enable you to receive mail addressed to you in care of General Delivery of your city, without any street address or post office box. In this way, you will be concealing an essential portion of your address without incurring the penalty of losing important mail.
19. Use name stickers, preferably those sent to you free of charge by charitable organizations. Such stickers frequently contain typographical errors. Remember that your time is much too valuable to bother yourself with correcting such errors.
20. Ignore the name-and-address format printed on the form attacking you. Use imagination and ingenuity. Stick your Zip Code right after your name, and your box number just ahead of the city in which you reside. Your interrogator will then assume that "Moe Klumpp 37954" is a prison inmate, and go nuts trying to find a city named "253 Ahmeek" (yes indeed, there is a town named "Ahmeek" in Michigan, and it does have a post office box numbered 253).
21. Join the armed forces, and get into a unit with a very long name, then abbreviate everything, including your rank. The average civilian will not be able to make heads or tails out of your abbreviations. Does CO stand for "Corporal"? Or "Commissioned Officer"? Or "Company"? Or something else? If your FPO is in San Francisco, California, banish the thought from your mind of saying so: SF will be sufficient, without any state name.
22. More either to Nebraska or to New Brunswick, use the state or province abbreviation NB, and neglect to specify whether you live in the United States or Canada. There are towns named ALMA in both places, if you want to make the ploy a tactical triumph.
23. After your street address, add an enigmatic # 4. What is that # 4? The floor you live on? The number of your apartment? The number of your space in a trailer court? Or what? Keep 'em guessing!
24. If you must submit a payment with the completed form, make sure that the address on your check differs from the address on your form. You will, no doubt, have a satisfactory explanation for the discrepancy; you, for example, have moved recently but continue using your old supply of checks. Still, the discrepancy will cause

the Grand Inquisitor harrowing nights of sleeplessness, wrestling with the problem you have created for him.

25. Feign ignorance of how to spell the name of the city in which you live, to cause your tormentor extra work. If you live in RIVIERA BEACH, Florida, spell the name RIVERIA BEACH -- a surprising number of the town's residents do just that!

I could go on, given adequate space. However, I believe that the 25 ploys just enumerated are a representative sampling of what can be done to withhold your name and address, or to disguise or distort it. With these examples to inspire you, it should be comparatively easy for you to generate many further tactics in the unending struggle against the tyranny of the printed form demanding surrender of your identity. To employ strategy of your own invention will yield a far greater degree of satisfaction than following in my footsteps can possibly give you.